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An Easter Story of
England In the
Olden Days

IN a pretty Elizabethan cottage surrounded by shade trees and a flower garden dwelt Miss Jessamine Sands and her fair young niece, Betty. The former was a noted housewife and tried her utmost to add this same good quality to Betty's lengthy list of accomplishments. The two ladies were considered heiresses by the villagers, for the rentals from the elder's farms brought no mean amount each month. Betty's father had left her several thousand pounds.

Miss Jessamine, being the head of the house and extremely religious, used the greater part of her income dispensing charity to the needy. Little Betty never could understand why they were considered wealthy, for she was supplied with a new dress and a bonnet only once every two years.

Betty sat beside a window mending a rent in a muslin frock. Two rows of red geraniums in pots of the same hue contributed a fascinating note of cheery brightness to the sitting room. Now and then she glanced from her work to the aristocratic profile of her aunt.

"What causes such unseemly restlessness this morning, child?" Miss Jessamine asked, busily threading a needle.

Betty's lovely face became dyed to match the flowerpots, and she stitched rapidly at the rent.

"I trust William has not asked you to drive again, for he has had you to Bradbury twice this week, which is quite often enough."

Judge Trimble and his family occupied the home adjoining the Sands' cottage, and William, their oldest son, had been Betty's playmate ever since the little girl first came to live with her aunt.

"Aunt Jessamine, Phoebe Blackmore teased me about wearing the same Sabbath frock for two years and said it was a shame that I was not allowed to purchase a new one now and then since I am supposed to be an heiress."

"Phoebe is a gossip to talk to you of such things, and I disapprove of her frivolous ways. Your father left you well provided for, and I dare say you always appear genteel and neat when you walk abroad, and that is all that is required of a maid."

"Aunt Jessamine, next Sabbath is Easter. All the girls have new silk frocks and bonnets to match. I am past seventeen, and never have you given me a dress of silk. If I have means of my own I desire, above all things, to visit London and buy the loveliest flowered taffeta I can find. Please say we will go."

"Since you are no longer content with the wardrobe selected by me I suppose we will have to purchase some London finery. Master William will think no more of you with all your fine togery than he would if you attended church in your simple muslin frock."

The Easter morning chimes awakened Betty. By the time the last bell summoned the tardy worshippers to divine service she had donned her flowered taffeta trimmed with frills of lace and tied beneath her chin the broad ribbons of her poke bonnet. The vain little sinner gazed at her reflection in the mirror, and a smile of satisfaction radiated her countenance.

Aunt Jessamine could not conceal her astonishment and pride when the fair vision descended the stairs. "Well, well, fine feathers have certainly made my Betty lovely! Hasten, child! Do not stop for poses."

William walked home with Betty from the church, while Aunt Jessamine remained to invite the pastor to dinner.

When they entered the garden William boldly clasped her hand between his own, saying: "Betty, dearest, I want you to know that I love you. This morning when your song floated into my heart I knew you were the one. Can you love me?"

The dainty maiden's frank blue eyes gazed into the brown ones as she archly said, "Was it the bonnet, William, that made you care?"

"No," he answered; "it was the girl beneath the bonnet."—Jean Douglas in New York Press.

Easter In Russia.

Throughout Russia the Easter ceremonies are impressive because of many solemn details. Thus on the midnight preceding Easter the priests leave the church as if going out to seek the body of the dead Lord. The congregation waits in the sanctuary with bowed heads, in silence and in darkness. Then the listening multitude is aroused by ponderous knockings on the door of the church. The priests have returned, and as the doors swing open a great chorus of voices fills the air with the chant, "Christ is risen!" The priests file in with upturned faces and singing lips, each bearing a lighted taper. Fire is quickly communicated to the candles of the supplicating throng. In a twinkling the church is ablaze with light and incense, where only darkness and silence had been before.

CURIOUS EASTER CUSTOM.

A curious Easter custom has been observed for many centuries in the western Alps. One hundred eggs are distributed over a level space covered with sand, and the young men and women perform a dance around them. If a couple are fortunate enough to finish the dance without breaking an egg it is taken as a token of the compatibility of their temperaments, and they are betrothed, and that is perhaps as good a method of making marriages as any yet discovered.

Easter In Old Chester, England.

In old cities old customs are kept up much longer than anywhere else. The people retain some of the characteristics that distinguish their homes. Especially was this true of the city of Chester up to a few years ago. Almost from time immemorial the mayor, the corporation and members of the twenty ancient guilds of the city used to put aside their accustomed dignity and devote themselves to football on Easter day, while their edified townsmen looked admiringly on. After the match was over, the two sheriffs of the city marched out of the town to the field and competed with each other in the noble and skillful science of archery, the prize of which martial match was a dinner of calves' head and bacon! In 1640, however, such remuneration seeming unworthy of the mighty efforts they put forth for its attainment, the two incumbents of that office refused to shoot for their dinner, and the high magisterial consent was obtained to substitute a foot race for the archery trial and a silver plate for the dinner—that is, instead of the dinner. After that they had to pay for all their meals on Easter.

Easter Eggs In Turkey.

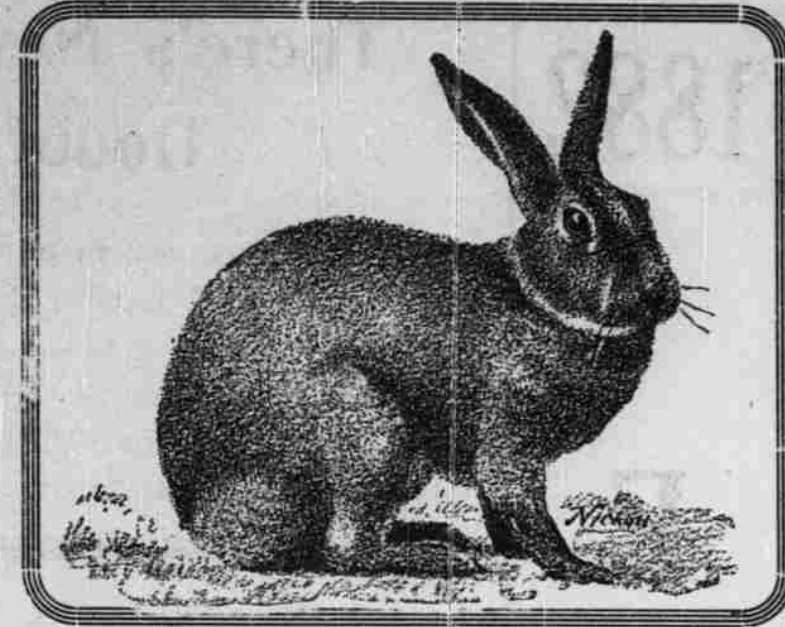
On Holy Thursday in Turkey every Christian woman boils a number of eggs with cochineal for the approaching Easter festival and also bakes a quantity of cakes and sweet biscuit. At the hour when the Bible is read she takes as many eggs as there are members in the household and one over, places them in a napkin and carries them to church, where she leaves them until Sunday.

The extra egg is placed before the "elkonostation," or place of the holy pictures, and is afterward kept as a sovereign remedy against all kinds of ills.

Many of these eggs have traced upon them in elegant characters texts of Scripture and other sacred words besides the date.

Comic Sermons For Easter.

In Roman Catholic countries it was an ancient custom, which lasted until some time in the middle of the seventeenth century, for the preacher to divert his congregation with what was termed a "fabula paschalis," which was becomingly received by the audience with "peals of Easter laughter." The comic sermon was supposed to be advisable, as the people often became "sour and morose" with the deprivations of Lent and needed toning up mentally as well as physically.



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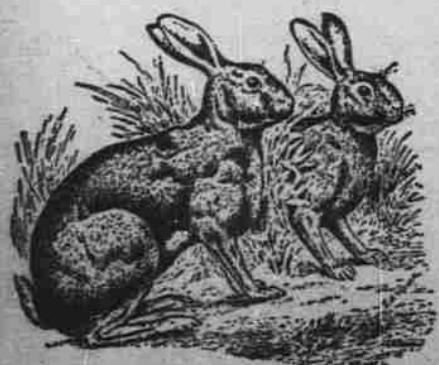
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Another View of It.

"It is as much trouble to raise a puppy as a boy," according to a critic of women. Perhaps, but the pup doesn't go to college and gamble your hard-earned money away, and then expect you to buy an annulment when he gets drunk and marries a chorus girl old enough to be his mother.—Louisville Courier-Journal.

Grow Their Own Cedar.

The lighthouse reservations on the great lakes are able to grow all the white cedar needed for spar buoys in their district.

Daily Thought.

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